



# North Carolina Arts Council

*Fifty years of leadership*

## Request for Qualifications

**Project:** Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, & Inclusion (DEAI) Audits for Arts Organizations

**Consultant Fee:** Up to \$20,000 per contract with a maximum of \$40,000 for contracts with at least two arts organizations chosen by the North Carolina Arts Council.

**Deadline:** March 29, 2021

## Project Summary and Goals

The North Carolina Arts Council is partnering with 1-2 nonprofit arts organizations to retain consultants to perform DEAI audits on the nonprofits as a pilot program. Consequently, the North Carolina Arts Council is seeking qualifications from independent organizational consultants or firms with specific expertise in advancing diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion, and mitigating unconscious bias in organizations. The nonprofit organizations awarded a technical assistance grant to conduct a DEAI audit will receive the services of a consultant(s) selected by the North Carolina Arts Council through this Request for Qualifications. The two, pre-identified arts organizations that will receive grant funds have expressed an interest in acknowledging and removing barriers to provide equitable access to grant funding, employment/leadership, and professional development opportunities and will fully cooperate with the audit.

The N.C. Arts Council seeks to accomplish the following goals through this pilot program.

- ***To Engage in Authentic Self-Learning and Reflection:*** The N.C. Arts Council desires to improve partner arts organizations' awareness and deepen their understanding of DEAI through a transparent process involving sincere dialogue and feedback.
- ***To Gain Actionable Discernment:*** The N.C. Arts Council wishes to receive insight-driven recommendations that inform partner arts organizations' strategic plans that feature DEAI as an emphasized area throughout the institutions' infrastructures.
- ***To Improve Understandings and Outcomes:*** The N.C. Arts Council seeks to establish a respectful, safe, anti-racist, and harassment/retaliation-free learning and working environment for all partner organization staff, sub-grantees, fellows, interns, contractors, and volunteers. It is the goal to encourage and create work cultures within partner arts organizations that are inclusive through well-envisioned and appropriate programs, training, policies, and practices.
- ***To Model Leadership:*** The N.C. Arts Council desires that partner arts organizations provide equitable and inclusive environments for their staff, sub-grantees, artists, fellows, interns, contractors, and volunteers.



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## **Deliverables**

The N.C. Arts Council's ideal consultant will design, conduct, and complete a DEAI audit as well as prepare a report of findings, recommendations, and subsequent verbal presentation within six months to eight months. The final report will explain the research methodology (interviews, surveys, focus groups, document review, and an analysis of policies, procedures, programs, personnel, and business operations) and provide clear and actionable recommendations for making N.C. Arts Council partner arts organizations more inclusive and equitable.

## **Budget**

The consultant chosen to perform DEAI audit/s will enter into contractual agreements with partnering organizations and all consultant fees will be paid by partnering organizations rather than by the North Carolina Arts Council. The total amount to be paid to the consultant will not exceed \$20,000 per organization and will be inclusive of all expenses incurred for services including or associated with the following: travel; the research and engagement process; recommendations report; presentation of findings, and at least two follow-up visits with organizations.

## **Project Timeline** – subject to change

March	Qualification submittals due
April	Consultant interviews
May – September	Consultant conducts research and engagement with arts partners
October - November	Prepare Report Findings & Recommendations
December	Final Report Submittal and Presentations

## **Submittal Guidance**

Consultants are invited to submit qualifications for this project via email to

[Tamara.Brothers@ncdcr.gov](mailto:Tamara.Brothers@ncdcr.gov) by **March 29, 2021 (5:00 pm Eastern Time)** and should include:

- Letter of Interest
- Background and qualifications of consultant or firm, including a list of personnel or staff who would provide services for DEAI audit
- Relevant experience (including knowledge of North Carolina demographics, non-profit structures – preferably of the arts sector)
- Sample proposed audit overview
- Three References



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### **Background on the North Carolina Arts Council**

Founded in 1967 with the democratic vision of “arts for all citizens,” the North Carolina Arts Council sustains and grows the arts for the benefit of North Carolinians and their communities. The North Carolina Arts Council strives to deliver resources for arts development to all 100 counties of the state through programs that are fair, transparent, and accountable. The Arts Council is an agency of the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.

A 24-member citizen board, appointed by the Governor, advises the Secretary of the Department on policies, programs, and research that supports arts development across North Carolina.

Achieving the mission of “arts for all people” challenges the board and staff of the North Carolina Arts Council to hold the interest of the state above all other criteria when making policy, creating programs, or providing support for the arts. Specifically, N.C. Arts Council demonstrates leadership by:

- Creating and promoting best practices for how the arts are utilized for public benefit.
- Providing a statewide vision that sustains and develops the arts in all 100 counties.
- Undertaking regional and statewide initiatives to enhance our economy, education, and the well-being of our citizens and their communities.
- Offering grants and technical assistance through a competitive, fair, and transparent process.

Through its leadership, the Arts Council is working to ensure that North Carolina is a state that meets challenges and realizes its potential through the arts. N.C. Arts Council also acknowledges and embraces its responsibility to provide the most equitable and inclusive ecosystem and grant-making practices possible for its artists and arts organizations. The agency is committed to taking proactive steps to address system racism, discrimination, and social injustice within the Arts Council and partner arts organizations.

For additional background, please visit <https://www.ncarts.org/>.

**For additional information on this project:** contact Dr. Tamara Brothers, Deputy Director, North Carolina Arts Council, [Tamara.Brothers@ncdcr.gov](mailto:Tamara.Brothers@ncdcr.gov)